

NEVADA

Connections

Produced by Community College Southern Nevada to connect resources for Nevada's adult workforce

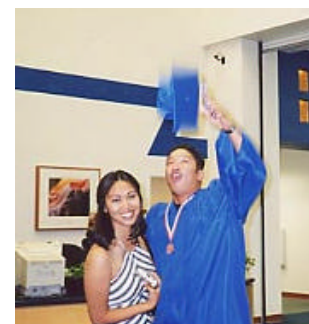
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Students celebrate success



'Tis the season for ceremonies and GED graduates are being honored throughout the state. This year the Community College of Southern Nevada and Great Basin College instituted formal ceremonies similar to those of other schools, such as the Clark County School District, Western Nevada Community College, and Lahontan Valley Literacy Volunteers.



Guidance for those still testing

Jennifer Brown, M.S. Ed., Adult Education Specialist with Steck-Vaughn, reports that a spring 2002 study conducted by InterActive Training Solutions involving over 300 adult learners who took Form PA of the Official GED Practice Tests revealed the questions students miss most often:

Subtest of Form PA	Most often missed question	Skill Set Required	Steck-Vaughn Resources
Math. Part I	#8	Student has to apply knowledge of a right triangle to figure the length of a leg when provided with a graphic and the area.	SV GED: Unit 4 pp. 298-307, 469-472 SV GED Complete Prep: Unit 6 pp. 608-612 SV GED Exercise: Unit 4 pp. 75-76 SV GED Skill Book: Calc. Bk. pp. 30-31 & Data Anal./Geom.
Math. Part II	#24	Student has to set up a formula to figure the relationship between a monthly payroll and an average wage.	SV GED: Unit 3 pp. 210-219 SV GED Complete Prep: Unit 6 pp. 561-567 SV GED Exercise: Unit 3 pp. 53-54 SV GED Skill Book: Number Operations pp. 20-28
LA Writing Part I	#12	Student has to delete words to create a more effective sentence.	SV GED: Unit 1 pp. 42-53 SV GED Complete Prep: Unit 1 pp. 72-75 SV GED Exercise: Unit 1 pp. 8-9 SV GED Skill Book: Sentence Structure pp. 21-23
LA Reading	#15	Student has to use ideas from the text in a situation different than that described	SV GED: Unit 1 pp. 32-96 SV GED Complete Prep: Unit 5 pp. 366-391 SV GED Exercise: Unit 1 pp. 4-18 SV GED Skill Book: Higher Order Thinking Skills
Social Studies	#24	Student has to draw a conclusion from supporting statements.	SV GED: Unit 4 pp. 178-185 SV GED Complete Prep: Unit 3 pp. 256-258 SV GED Exercise: Unit 4 pp. 35-44 SV GED Skill Book: Economics pp. 6-7, 24-25
Science	#23	Student has to use graphics and understand the concept of adaptation.	SV GED: Unit 2 pp. 126-133 SV GED Complete Prep: Unit 4 pp. 323-325 SV GED Exercise: Unit 2 pp. 21-31 SV GED Skill Book: Life Sci. pp. 30-31 and Inter. Graphics

Using the performance arts for ABE/ESL instruction

Editor's note: Angela Stack (775/273-1300, ext. 390, ajstack@gbis.com), has been using plays to teach literacy and employability skills to her students at Lovelock Correctional Center. The inmates have produced four plays (West Side Story, Camelot, The Wizard of Oz, and A Christmas Carol), complete with set designs, costumes, props, music, choreography, and acting.

Here's another creative idea—this time using film—that could easily be adapted for ABE/ESL use in Nevada.



Take 'em to the movies! Using *El Norte* in an ASE Program

—Carole Ann Borges, Teacher at the Wellspring Adult Learning Center, Hull, MA, caroleann1@yahoo.com, excerpted from "field notes" (MA Adult Ed. Newsletter), Summer 2000

The 16- to 23-year-olds in our Adult Secondary Education (ASE) diploma program have trouble focusing and staying "on task" for an extended length of time. Their ability to comprehend written material varies widely. They do have good oral skills and are often very outspoken and critical about assignments given. Popular films have proven to be an excellent teaching tool in this class, especially for those students who have learning disabilities and prefer visual and oral material.

All of the students have heartily embraced learning through popular films. They feel it's so much more interesting because you can "get the point" without having to read all the time.

Immigration Theme

The goal of our exploration about immigrants was to help students gain a better understanding about cultural differences, see how other cultures relate to work, examine immigration law, and learn how immigration affects the workplace.

Setting a Context: Examining Stereotypes

Several days before I showed the movie, I designed an activity to help students explore stereotypes. I wrote a list of several ethnic groups on the blackboard. The students were told to write down something that they thought was true about each group.

By examining the lists the individual students had made about different cultures, we saw that we all view other

The students initially anticipated being tortured with textbook chapters, charts and graphs, and perhaps one of those dreadful educational films about immigration. When I told them that this time we were going to watch a regular movie, the sighs of relief were audible. Chuckling to themselves, they thought they were really "getting one over" on the teacher. Little did they realize how much they were about to learn.

In this way, the students themselves helped to break down many of the prejudices other students held. Some of the listed beliefs surprised the group, especially the belief that Asians in Boston often cooked and ate cats.

ethnic groups through both fact and prejudice. Many heated debates, refutations, and personal experience stories grew out of the discussion about the student lists.

This class also offered me a good opportunity to discuss ways to distinguish facts versus beliefs and to reveal to the students how easy it is to make faulty assumptions if they are based on weak premises and lack of knowledge.

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Looking at History

Besides discussing personal experiences, I gave the students a handout that explored the role Chinese workers played in helping to build the railroads in America. ... This gave the students a better understanding of the positive effect immigration had in settling America.

Watching the Film

Before viewing *El Norte*, I shared my experiences living in Mexico, and one of the students discussed his time as an exchange student in Nicaragua. He brought photos to class, and we all passed them around, asking him a lot of questions about his experiences there. Then we located all these countries on the map.

I assured the students that *El Norte* was a very true depiction of life in Guatemala, and I reminded them that often this is not the case with romanticized Hollywood films.

Finally, the students were shown *El Norte* in two segments. The students had been told to take notes on anything they found interesting or curious about the film, but I also handed out a short list of teacher-generated questions to help focus their attention. Some of these questions included: *What was difference between life in the US and life in this country? What was the same? What was admirable about the people shown in the film?*

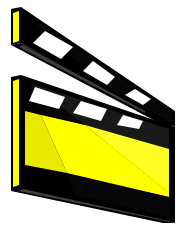
After showing the film, we discussed the teacher-generated questions and students' notes. Finally, the students wrote a five-paragraph essay on the one aspect of the movie that affected them the most.

Changes in the Students

The students were about the same age as the young people in the film. This helped them identify strongly with the main characters.

There is no question that the students gained an enormous amount of understanding from viewing *El Norte*. A new respect for another culture is easily seen in the more respectful way they talk about people from other countries. They seem less ethnocentric and want to learn more about other cultures.

By completing all of the supported activities, the students were able to look at the way other cultures view life in America, feel empathy for immigrants, and learn to appreciate cultural differences. They also compared & contrasted social, political, and ethical differences; understood how immigration has traditionally helped our labor force; and developed a better appreciation for our American systems of work and law. Students could view how families in other cultures relate to one another as they learned about materialism and how it affects individual lives. They began to know the difference between myth and fact, learned to question their own beliefs, and learned about symbolism and metaphors.



Social security information available on Spanish Web site

According to Larry Massanari, once Acting Commissioner of the Social Security Administration (SSA), "women, particularly Hispanic women, live longer than men, earn less and rely on Social Security for most of their retirement income." The Para la Mujer ("For Women") site, put up by the Social Security Administration (SSA), provides Hispanic women with information about their rights to benefits. It covers retirement, survivors, and disability and Supplemental Security Income benefits. The site offers guidance on finding an interpreter, a link to the SSA's English-Spanish glossary of terms, and instructions for obtaining a Social Security card. Check it out at <http://www.ssa.gov/espanol/mujeres>.

Connecting resources for Nevada's adult workforce

Universal thoughts: GED graduation pictures
from CCSN reflect comments from Elko and Fallon

"The ceremony gives the students a sense of belonging to the campus and the feeling that the College wants them to succeed and will be here to help them achieve their goals."

—Irma Reyes, Administrative Assistant,
GBC-ABE/ESL/Workplace Literacy

*"I am in the glory now that I have
gotten my GED and I live here!"*

—Francisco Laguna,
student, Lahontan Valley
Literacy Volunteers



Teachers and tutors study, too: There will be several free workshops for adult basic educators offered at various Nevada locations during the upcoming school year. Please send your e-mail address to robert_dorleans@ccsn.nevada.edu so that we may give you advance notice of appropriate offerings. Your address will not be sold or given to anyone for commercial purposes.